

The Role Of Technocrats In Shaping Foreign Policy

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Abstract

This paper deals with the important role of technocrats in the occupation of sovereign positions in the government. It is considered a very important factor that contributes to achieving goals that are in the interest of the state. When a technocrat is chosen, distinguished technocratic elites, who have experiences that their peers do not possess, must be chosen especially when they assume the highest sovereign positions in the state. A clear example is the Minister of Foreign Affairs, who plays a very important role in political life by drawing up the state's foreign policy in cooperation with the head of the executive authority through planning and studying decisions and matching between alternatives, and choosing the best of them.

The experiences of developed countries in utilizing the energies and capabilities of their cadres in various fields and the advanced strides they made in various aspects of foreign policy are the best evidence that the technocratic approach in state management is one of the administrative models that countries facing serious dilemmas in achieving growth and development can adopt. It also tries to enable the state's sovereign decision to be independent of the influence of the narrow interests of parties and groups that are making efforts to preserve their gains rather than striving to achieve the higher interests of the state.

1- Introduction

The importance of technocrats in shaping foreign policy has increased. The political decision-making offices have produced a conviction that foreign policymakers must know a lot of information, regardless of what they are interested in. This is because technocrats do not follow what they prefer, but rather what dictates the position or position they occupy. A government that is based on the presence of technocratic experts will undoubtedly enhance the role of external work in a way that does not affect the pattern based on experience and scientific approach.

The technical knowledge of technocrats is what improves and enhances their position within the foreign policy-making office, and countries often resort to the technocratic elites in the foreign policy-making process because of their knowledge in formulating foreign policy.

Public opinion and decision-making constitute the most important aspects of technocrats in foreign policy, as the reliance on specialized knowledge will raise the level of public opinion in making foreign policy as well as in the form of foreign decision-making. The work of the technocrats also serves to achieve the national interest of their country by reforming the foreign policy in line with achieving the desired goals of the state. Perhaps Henry Kissinger is the best technocratic model, who played a prominent role in drawing American foreign policy through what he achieved for the United States of America that no one else could achieve.

2- The Concept of Technocrats

The term "technocrats" is derived from the Greek language. It consists of two parts, "technocracy", which means art and technician who possesses a great deal of

science and knowledge. And the affix “cracy” means authority and rule. It refers to the government of technicians, independent people who practice politics and do not participate in elections. They are persons who are specialized in a particular field, like doctors and engineers. However, they bear the responsibility through what they have of scientific experience (Spela and Alharmozi, 2017). Technocracy is resorted to when political issues and disagreements occur (Atta and Abu Alhasan, 2017). According to Al-Kayyali, technocracy is a modern concept that arose and spread as a result of industrial and technological development. It began with the French socialist (Saint-Simon), who predicted the establishment of a society governed by scholars. Others, depending on this expectation, say that real authority must be managed by experts, as it is the power of experts through which society moves to democracy. The term was introduced by (William Henry Smith) in 1919, who called for specialized people to take over the rule. The term was then used by (Howard Scott), who turned into a political movement in America that became famous as a result of the economic depression. The importance of technocracy has increased as the importance of sciences increased in all aspects of our life. As presented by Albahrain Institution, technocratic governments are formed based on specialization. Accordingly, the government established is known as the technocratic government, and the minister in it is described as the technocratic minister. Other authors define technocracy as (the rule of technology) or the rule of scientists and technicians. The power of technocracy has increased due to the increasing importance of science and the complexity of the fields of life, especially the economic and military ones. Technocrats have the power to decide on the allocation of resources and strategic and economic planning in technocratic countries.

According to Hannah (1967), technocratic governance is the rule of those who have reached the pinnacle of their specialization. Technocrats are also defined as elitists by defining an elite distinguished

from ordinary people based on their scientific expertise, specialization in their work, superior academic qualifications, and intellect. This elite consists of those who know best how to direct society, which contrasts with ordinary citizens who are less equipped in terms of skills, time, and scientific knowledge. As Shils (1956) believes, through experience and a scientific approach, the technocrat can determine the best solution or reality for society.

Depending on the foregoing, we find that the concept of technocrats refers to the highly educated, professionally trained persons who have scientific knowledge in the work entrusted to them. This means that they work according to the principle of institutional knowledge work, which produces a scientific and practical environment under the correct method of building the state, and they are not influenced by the owner of authority. They always provide the ideal model for the leadership of institutions scientifically.

3- The Influence of Technocrats on Foreign Policy

States are not built by harnessing the available energies and capabilities that their citizens possess in addition to choosing the best and most qualified, with a scientific and academic background to assume the highest sovereign positions in the state, especially the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. These people are aware of the country's interests. So, they employ the resources their countries have to serve their countries and achieve the well-being of their citizens inside and outside the country. Technocrats are distinguished from other independent politicians through compliance with instructions with a kind of pragmatism and political impartiality. They have specialized and scientific abilities that make them qualified to hold high positions away from ideologies and political orientations. This can be seen through the desired results.

First: The Importance of Technocrats in the Decision-Making Process

Technocrats depend on two basic principles in foreign policy: public opinion and political decision-making. The lack of sufficient information and its ambiguity presented by the media to the Minister of Foreign Affairs in addition to the effects resulting from technological development worsen the situation. This can be attributed to poor training and insufficient attention to institutions and intellectuals. Thus, as Bucchi declares, the non-technocratic foreign minister may behave irrationally because he/she does not have a specialized scientific background in the field of work. Therefore, he/she falls prey to fears, which raise his/her hostility and suspicion towards other parties. As a result of what globalization has produced based on the increase in economic issues and their intertwining, foreign political decisions are taken on a more economic basis. The presence of a technocratic mentality can harmonize economic issues to achieve political goals through threats or cutting off economic aid, which forces the other country to submit and provide assistance. In this way, as Salih believes, controlling the administration of internal and foreign affairs continues. Given the lack of scientific knowledge among citizens and politicians, complex issues must be dealt with by those with the ability to do.

Technocrats, according to Esmark (2020), always believe in the existence of ideal solutions to all problems. These solutions can be discovered and accessed through accurate and objective analysis of scientific evidence. But they prioritize competencies and optimal results over legitimacy and view society as a machine with many moving parts that need to function effectively.

The technocrat in foreign policy, as Dusek believes, plays an important role in risk management by conducting an objective and scientific analysis of the risks he/she faces. So, actions are taken based on the results reached, according to the analyses that are conducted on a rational basis. These risks are dealt with in an

unbiased manner that is affected by political and economic interests. In addition, mathematical analyses and empirical surveys are used by experts, which often conflict with public opinion and popular claims.

Second: Role of Technocrats in Planning Foreign Policy

The role of technocrats in planning foreign policy includes their direct influence on the decision-maker, as well as the role they play within the institutions in making foreign policy (Misbah, 2007).

Abdulhay (2000) believes that the direct influence of experienced technocrats on decision-makers is related to the nature of their presence within the political system. They are mostly appointed by the higher authority depending on their expertise in the affairs for which they are delegated to make use of their opinions and recommendations. In all cases, technocrats exercise their power and influence on decision-makers and the decisions made by leaders.

However, by being close to decision-makers, technocrats improve their influence, power, and experience. Although decision-makers may hold their seats of power democratically, most consider the technical expertise and knowledge of technocrats essential to carry out their political plans. For example, defense measures and policies are often developed in consultation with military advisors to present their views directly to decision-makers, and the same is true for diplomatic affairs and international relations (Friedman, 2020).

Although recommendations made by technocrats may directly conflict with the interests of people that can be met with public opposition, their role in foreign policy planning cannot be held accountable. Hence the popular concept of the deep state emerged, which consists of strong and reliable technocrats next to decision-makers, and they represent an

immune oligarchy that governs its interests (Al-Qadhi, 2019).

But in any case, it cannot be said that technocrats who are an immune oligarchy that governs their interests are not concerned with the broader public interests, but the opposite may be true, especially in democratic political systems (Esmark, 2020). In the institutions concerned with making foreign policy, namely: the presidency or the government in parliamentary systems, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the military (the Ministry of Defense), and national security bodies, the role of technocrats in influencing foreign policy is not the same as it is when they have direct contact with the decision-maker responsible for foreign policy (Goldstein, 2019).

As Robertson (2005) states, the role of technocrats in foreign policy is primarily concerned with building sustainable strategies: the country's long-term plans for foreign policy, collecting and analyzing information, issuing reports on opportunities and challenges, and making plans for the development of the country's foreign policy at the diplomatic and non-diplomatic levels.

It is clear from this that there is a difference between the direct influence of technocrats on decision-makers and their role within the bureaucratic foreign policy-making system. They may play roles similar to those assigned to institutions of foreign policymaking specifically in political systems where democratic norms are not applied and with the longevity of technocrats along with decision-makers. In the sense that they may participate in setting medium and long-term foreign policy plans and not only issuing recommendations on urgent and emerging issues (Hutchings, 2015).

Third: Role of Technocrats in the Governance Process

According to the European Commission, specialized knowledge is a prerequisite for modern governance to be able to respond appropriately to the problems of today's society. The informed policy-making

process must have a sound base of knowledge. Traditionally, government bureaucracies have monopolized the knowledge of experts in the political process. This is confirmed by Max Weber, who believes that monopolizing power by bureaucrats who neglect the knowledge of experts is something that cannot be done in modern governments. This forces government bureaucracy to deal with more complex problems and find appropriate solutions to daily problems by relying on outside consultants to acquire the knowledge they need to make sound policy (ibid). The role of technocrats in governance was first associated with the participation of the middle class in ruling capitalist countries after World War II. Then this class was able to control the political power in the Soviet Union and in the countries that were under the rule of the communist parties, and the new class grew in power by confirming its control over the armed forces and the state apparatus (Goldblatt, et al., 2005).

Since then, the role of the middle class has become central to technocratic governance. It has also become very difficult to ignore its role in political and economic affairs. It can be said that the role of technocracy in governance represents the crystallization of ideas and rational actions that define the modern world. The middle class to which technocrats belong is the end product of technological and economic developments and social revolutions that have occurred all over the world (Conaghan and Malloy, 1995).

Technocrats, as Camp (2014) declares, are evaluated through their technical expertise, competence, and their qualifications in economic development. They put their strong belief in rational planning and management, thus technocratic ideology acquires an idealized internal logic that makes it powerful and capable of seizing authority.

Technocracy is a system of governance in which technical experts (technocrats) rule under their competence, knowledge, and position in sovereign political and economic institutions. As presented by

Evans (2007), Technocrats' role and presence within the ruling institutions are characterized by some features, including:

1. making laws and regulations to pay attention to performance and efficiency and not to individuals.
2. applying rules by designing systems that are difficult to break or violate.
3. coordinating the work of the various government branches with each other and exchanging knowledge among them to maximize the performance of each branch in an equal manner as much as possible.
4. nominating experts only to entrust them with the positions that make critical decisions in the bureaucratic system, so that the assignment of tasks to non-technocrats is minimal.

From these features, they may constitute an authoritarian framework. But, the reality of the work of technocrats within the system of governance depends on designed proactiveness. It is a form of problem-solving where their work - as mentioned previously in other places in this chapter - is based on adaptation and not on personal needs and interests. (Carmona, et.al, 2007).

Evans (2007) claims that the role of technocrats in governance creates what can be seen as a technological bureaucracy, which is a more modern and technical model than traditional bureaucracy models and forms. In addition, the power of the technological bureaucracy, other than being legal, is more reasonable as it is derived from technical insights and expertise.

Reliance on expert committees, as Carmona (2016) states, is a symbol of technocratic governance. When policymakers consult with a group of experts, they are motivated by technocratic concerns (i.e. the search for specialized knowledge). Because of the technological progress in the nineteenth century, a number of theorists of social peace called

for technical organizations to manage the atmosphere between countries and build a global system of government based on rational public administration.

4- Henry Kissinger as a Technocratic Model

Henry Kissinger is the most prominent example of technocrats who have held high-ranking positions and made a huge impact on politics not only in his country but also on a global level. As Henry Kissinger assumed the position of Secretary of State of the United States of America, he became known as a politician and technocrat. He combined his academic (technocratic) specialization with the job assigned to him in managing and making foreign policy.

Henry Kissinger is classified as an academic, statesman, and public thinker. He is considered one of the most unique and most influential figures in American history in dealing with the problems he faces from his appointment as National Security Adviser to President Nixon in 1968 until the end of his government career as US Secretary of State to President Gerald Ford in 1977. He skillfully dealt with the problems that the 37th president faced abroad, the Vietnam War, the Soviet Union, the SALT arms control treaty, and US President Nixon's visit to China, in addition to his efforts to settle the volatile situation in the Middle East. Due to his way of dealing with the above situations as well as his unusually high position in power, we can say he was stronger than President Nixon during the Watergate scandal and his presence in government through some of the most influential events of the 20th century (Mosely, 2010). He was often described as an intelligent person who was distinguished by his temper and courage in making decisions. He was tactful in speech, and a person inclined to compromise solutions that satisfies everyone. He played an important role in managing crises that threatened American national security during his tenure as the US National

Security Adviser and US Secretary of State. He relied his expertise in his intellectual capacity. He also mentioned in his memoir that politicians possess convictions that are consumed during their tenure of office. There is no doubt that Kissinger exploited the intellectual balance that he accumulated during his academic career (Berridge, et al., 2021). That intellectual capacity enabled him to develop his skills and implement measures with an emphasis on logic, realism, and rationality, to manage foreign policy efficiently. Kissinger realized that all scientific theories must be tested in the world of actual policymaking.

The American foreign policy witnessed transformations after Henry Kissinger assumed government work, through his comprehensive view of dealing with the world, regardless of their ideologies and affiliations. His strategy was to achieve stability through diplomacy, not through weapons (Lord, 2021). This is what happened after Kissinger entered the government by acting as a mediator in the Middle East to prevent the Soviet Union from dominating and threatening American interests in the region, as well as through shuttle negotiations with China and Vietnam. He helped America to exit the war predicament.

Through his work as National Security Adviser, and later as Secretary of State, American foreign policy came under severe pressure. The personality of Kissinger played a role in the modification of the executive branch. It led to the development of a comprehensive strategy that enabled him to deal with events. Moreover, it transferred America from mutual isolation to an exciting openness, from dealing with one communist country to dealing with many communist countries, from a state of tension to more stable relations in China and Vietnam, and from the hegemony of Soviet weapons to diplomacy (Argyris, 1991).

In addition to that, his leadership role and scientific experience represented in the intellectual capital he possesses and the great confidence granted by President Nixon gave him the primary responsibility

in foreign affairs in the process of achieving American interests.

4-1 Détente with the Soviet Union: He achieved a détente with the Soviet Union after a rupture that lasted since the end of World War II, through a channel of communication that arose between the two. The relations between the two countries began to develop in what was later called the policy of détente, which means the détente of US-Soviet relations. It was constantly fueled by the struggle of capitalist ideologies against communism. After the rounds of negotiations he conducted, he was able to reach the SALT 1 and SALT 2 agreements that put an end to the proliferation of nuclear weapons (Almansoori, 2021).

4-2 The Development of Relations with China: Kissinger had a role in normalizing the relationship with China through the negotiations he conducted with China. Despite the many obstacles to the secret negotiations over the two years from 1970 to 1972, these moves achieved success in February 1972 when Nixon became the first American president who walked on Chinese lands (Chan, 1988). That visit resulted in the Shanghai Declaration, which achieved the United States' strategic goals in the South Asia and Pacific region. On top of that is the establishment of official relations with what was considered the largest wall of defense against the Soviet expansion in this region. On the other hand, the People's Republic of China achieved official American recognition of it and the consequent result of it was receiving a permanent seat at the United Nations (Carroll-Foster, 1993).

It can be said that the launch of a new policy toward the People's Republic of China was a common idea upon which Nixon and Kissinger agreed. Its goals are to halt the proliferation of nuclear weapons, reduce the challenge posed by the Soviet Union to American security interests, and reduce costs and risks related to fulfilling U.S. defense commitments in Southeast and Northeast Asia by developing a long-term policy toward China. At the same time, it helped in serving the American

situation in Vietnam, and those goals represent what is called the strategy of *realpolitik* for East Asia.

4-3 Stability of the Situations in the Middle East: Kissinger also had a footprint in the Middle East, by working to reduce the Russian presence in the region. His strategic goal was to achieve diplomatic progress and a solution to the Arab-Israeli problem through American diplomacy, not through Russian weapons. Kissinger is considered one of the centers of power in the American-Middle East negotiations from 1969 to 1975, especially after the 1973 war in which the Egyptian and Syrian forces simultaneously attacked the Israeli forces in the Sinai and the Golan Heights. Kissinger had been lauded for his shuttle diplomacy in the Middle East. More specifically, he had been praised for achieving, to some extent, bilateral peace between Egypt and Israel. As a result, he could broker a series of disengagement agreements (Abulof, 2014).

According to Al-Bakoory (1975), the most important characteristic of Kissinger is his mental and intellectual abilities, through which he was able to reach what he had reached. He adopted the idea of defending the interests of the United States of America and its role in confronting communist thought. Kissinger sought to implement political strategies that maximize the chance of survival and continuation of the hegemony of the United States of America. Kissinger's behavior as a realist was in the interest of achieving a strategy that achieved vital goals for America through his comprehensive view of dealing with the world, regardless of their ideology and affiliation.

Kissinger played a role in shaping the structure of American foreign policy, and as Secretary of State, following the requirements and strategic interests of the United States. He formed a milestone in the history of American foreign policy.

The achievement of *détente* in the tense international relations between the great powers, the opening to China, the cease-fire in the October War, and the end of the Vietnam War, although it failed here to secure peace with honor, are testament to his accomplishments as a statesman, whose work was beyond the capacity of any outsider. Even after the end of his official career, Kissinger remained a much sought-after advisor and commentator on international affairs.

5- Conclusions

Technocrats play an active role in formulating foreign policy, through the efficiency and techniques they possess, which are a key focus in the formulation and expression of the foreign policy of the country they represent. With the increasing keenness of countries to choose efficient and technocratic personalities to represent them externally, their influence has increased significantly in the fields of foreign policy.

The growing role of technocrats in foreign policy can be seen through the decision-making process, which depends largely on the efficiency of the decision-maker, or in the stage of foreign policy planning, which requires a great deal of insight and knowledge to take into account national interests and other foreign policies. Their role extends to their influence on the decision-maker due to their direct presence in the political system. Accordingly the more contact they have with the decision-maker, the greater their influence will be.

The specialized knowledge available to technocrats contributes in one way or another to their effectiveness in the governance process under the competence they enjoy. Finally, they are considered among the elites that exercise power within the framework of the governance process through the knowledge and specialization they rely on. This contributes to their emergence as an effective and influential body in governance.

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